

Message Text

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64

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07

IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 /057 W

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R 171812Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7379

INFO USAEC WASHDC

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS LONDON 00819

FOR OES, OFFICE OF NUCLEAR & ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

FOR OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, USAEC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH

SUBJ: SAFETY OF PRESSURE VESSELS USED IN NUCLEAR
REACTORS

1. AT A SCIENTIFIC MEETING IN LONDON ON JANUARY 13, 1975, DR. WALTER MARSHALL, CHIEF SCIENTIST OF THE UK DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY INDICATED THAT THE EAGERLY AWAITED HARWELL STUDY ON THE SAFETY OF LARGE PRESSURE VESSELS OF THE TYPE USED IN THE PWR NUCLEAR REACTORS WOULD BE FURTHER DELAYED.

2. THE HARWELL STUDY WAS INITIATED IN RESPONSE TO SEVERE CRITICISMS OF PRESSURE VESSEL SAFETY BY DR. ALAN COTTRELL, A FORMER CHIEF SCIENTIST ADVISER OF THE UK GOVERNMENT. DR. COTTRELL, A HIGHLY RESPECTED THEORETICAL METALLURGIST AND A WORLD AUTHORITY ON THE STRENGTH OF MATERIALS, HAD INDICATED UNHAPPINESS WITH THE STATE OF UNDERSTANDING OF POSSIBLE MODES OF FAILURE OF LARGE VESSELS. HE FELT THAT SUDDEN
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CATASTROPHIC FAILURE WAS WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF POSSIBILITY

POSSIBLY LEADING TO A MAJOR REACTOR ACCIDENT.

3. A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON PRESSURE VESSEL FAILURE WAS BEGUN AT HARWELL EARLY IN 1974 AT THE REQUEST OF THE NUCLEAR INSTALLATION INSPECTORATE AND WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETE BY AUGUST 1974. DELAYS HAD OCCURRED IN THE WORK AND THE DELIVERY DATE WAS POSTPONED ONCE TO

DICATED THAT A FURTHER DELAY OF AT LEAST FOUR MORE MONTHS WOULD BE NECESSARY. HE ATTRIBUTED THE DELAYS TO THE COMPLEXITY OF THE SUBJECT AND THE NECESSITY TO DO AN OUTSTANDING JOB. "THEY WISHED TO GET IT RIGHT," HE SAID.

SPIERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RESEARCH, NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS, NUCLEAR SAFETY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON00819
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750019-0810
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750139/aaaabidg.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 MAY 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <25 Nov 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAFETY OF PRESSURE VESSELS USED IN NUCLEAR REACTORS
TAGS: TECH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006